



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-3371, **Agenda Item #:** 19.

10/29/2020

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance authorizing the acceptance of \$20,000 in grant funds from the Walmart Foundation, administered through the Partnership for a New American Economy Research Fund, and amending the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Management Services Department's Equity Office Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20200812-001) to appropriate \$20,000 to support participation in a research project about COVID-19 emergency response efforts and the City's immigrant communities.

Lead Department

Equity Office

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$20,000 is being granted to the Equity Office from the Walmart Foundation, administered through the Partnership for a New American Economy Research Fund. A City funding match is not required. A fiscal note is attached.

Prior Council Action

March 20, 2014 Council passed Resolution No 20140320-049 which directed the City Manager to engage community stakeholders in defining the vision for Austin as a welcoming city for immigrants and to assist the Commission on Immigrant Affairs in hosting a Welcoming City conference to accomplish this goal.

August 12, 2020 Council passed Ordinance No. 20200812-001 which adopted the City of Austin Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

For More Information

Rocio Villalobos, Community Services Program Coordinator - Immigrant Affairs, 512-351-5929

Additional Backup Information

The New American Economy (NAE) is a research and advocacy organization that works at the local, state, and federal level around issues related to immigration. NAE contacted the Equity Office about being part of a grant proposal focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, including immigrant communities, that would be submitted to the Walmart Foundation. The Equity Office was recently notified that NAE was one of the grant recipients. This means the City of Austin - along with Tulsa, Denver, Atlanta, and Louisville - will have the opportunity to participate in a research project focusing on COVID-19, disaster preparedness,

inclusion, and the City's communities of color and immigrant communities.

In Austin, and across the nation, cities are seeing how COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color and further exacerbated inequities present in the City of Austin. We are also seeing the ways in which the City's immigrant communities, in particular, are facing a multitude of challenges during this pandemic, such as being able to access information and services in their primary language, receiving financial assistance due to unemployment, unsafe working conditions for frontline workers due to employer negligence, and more.

As a grant recipient, the Equity Office will work with NAE and community partners to design and conduct a survey of Austin residents, specifically communities of color and immigrant communities, to better understand how COVID-19 has impacted their perceptions of community inclusion and belonging (this could include health, economic, and other areas). The Equity Office will also participate in a working group of five cities (Austin, Tulsa, Denver, Atlanta, Louisville) to discuss findings and gain insight from the work other cities are doing to support communities of color and immigrant communities during this pandemic.

The City is receiving \$20,000 in grant funds from the Walmart Foundation, administered through the Partnership for a New American Economy Research Fund, to support participation in a research project about COVID-19 emergency response efforts and the City's immigrant communities. This grant will cover the research project activities taking place from October 12, 2020 through April 16, 2021. This is aligned with the Council's Strategic Outcomes as well as the resolution that developed the Equity Office in that it seeks to transform systems and processes using an equity lens. This grant is also aligned with the resolution that sought to establish the vision for Austin as a welcoming city for immigrant communities and impelled the City to "begin troubleshooting current and future issues that will affect Austin's immigrant population." Being a part of this research project can inform the City's future emergency response and disaster preparedness efforts so that Austin is better positioned to address the needs of its most vulnerable communities. The grant budget is based on implementation and culminates in the completion of an activities report to the grantor.

The General Fund will not be required to contribute to this grant.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Government that Works for All; Health and Environment; Economic Opportunity and Affordability.